

January 2009

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New bank access site developed on the Green River

The Fisheries and Engineering Divisions are proud to unveil the completion of the new bank access site for anglers on the Green River near the mouth of the Pond River.

This site is located in McLean County near the town of Jewel City. The bank access site was constructed adjacent to the boat ramp and was built with a combination of rip-rap and “Armor-Flex” block. The boat ramp was built previously during 2007.

Both the boat ramp and bank access site were funded in part using Sport Fish Restoration Funds; funds obtained through excise taxes on various sport fish equipment and tackle in addition to taxes on motorboat fuels.

This site has been named the “Kittinger Boat Ramp and Bank Access Site” after the last name of the original landowner.

Good job Walt and company, on a site well built.

Kittinger Boat Ramp and
Bank Access Site



INSIDE:



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retirees!



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dinner

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

This letter came from Joe Rogerson, Deer and Furbearer Project Leader with the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife. Mr. Rogerson is commending **Charlie Logsdon** on his efforts with this past season's bull elk hunt. Mr. Rogerson was awarded a bull tag and Charlie was more than helpful with getting him started on his hunt. He went far beyond what should be expected from that of any state employee. Mr. Rogerson stated he knows how thankful our professions can be, so he wanted to take a moment to commend Charlie.

Thanks to all who worked with the elk hunts this year. You are great ambassadors for KDFWR.

This letter came from Mrs. J. Hardin Davis in Shelby County. Mrs. Davis thanks **Conservation Officer Doug Detherage** for his assistance during the recent deer season. She said she was truly appreciative of Officer Detherage's help.

This letter came from Elven Yoder in Hardyville. Mr. Yoder expressed his gratitude to **Conservation Officer Joe Mills** for his assistance to his Amish group dur-

ing the recent deer season. He stated Officer Mills was very considerate and made their hunting season more pleasurable.

This letter came from Charles Denney with the Conley Bottom Resort. Mr. Denney expressed his appreciation for the information provided by **Col. Bob Milligan** at this year's Kentucky Marina Association conference. He stated he and the folks at the Conley Bottom Resort appreciate the work Col. Milligan and our officers do to provide them with a safe waterway.

This letter came from John Russell and the West Kentucky Field Trial Club. Mr. Russell stated the West Kentucky Field Trial Club concluded its program of open field trials on December 5 on the West Kentucky WMA. The trials this year were of very high quality thanks largely to the quality of the grounds on the WMA. The work done over the last few years and in this year in particular to improve the quail habitat was much in evidence and greatly appreciated. The efforts of **Tim Kreher and his staff** to support the bird dog trials and other activities are greatly appreciated. He also stated the members

of the club appreciate KDFWR's support to provide such a valuable resource.

Congratulations go to **Conservation Officer Aaron Daniels** for his help with an injured deer. Ken and Charlotte Ramsey of Fisherville called Officer Daniels looking for direction and help with the deer. In an e-mail to the Commissioner, they stated Officer Daniels was very considerate and professional as well as very empathic to their concerns regarding their children. They wanted to thank him for doing such a difficult job with great care and compassion.

To all our KDFWR staff – Your involvement with the public reflects on the Department as a whole. Keep up the good work and thank you for all you do!

NOTE to Division Directors: When you receive comments such as these, please notify the Commissioner's Office. We are confident in our staff's ability to interact with the public and would like to share compliments and comments with everyone.



Above: Male Kentucky Arrow Darter in breeding colors collected from Big Double Creek (Red Bird River Drainage) in Clay County.



Below: Male Cumberland Darter collected from Laurel Creek (upper Cumberland River Drainage) in McCreary County. *Matt Thomas photos*

Darter corrections

In December issue of this newsletter, a Fisheries Division story about the challenges of reintroducing some non-game fishes in Kentucky appeared with photos of the Kentucky Arrow Darter and the Cumberland Darter misidentified.

At left are photos of the Kentucky Arrow Darter and the Cumberland Darter, bearing the appropriate and correct identifications.

December retirements

Lynn Garrison

Lynn Garrison, Director of Public Affairs retired effective December 31 after 36+ years of service.

Lynn started with KDFWR in June of 1972 as a Conservation Club Leader. In 1982 he was promoted to Conservation Education Program Supervisor. He was appointed as an As-



sistant Director, Wildlife Division, in 1986 and Conservation Education Division Director in 1990.

He worked with Conservation Education until December 1993 when he was appointed to the position of Director over the Public Affairs & Policy Division. Lynn had many career

achievements including that of being the principal author of the Copperbelly Water Snake Habitat Conservation Plan, Green River CREP plan, Biodiversity Task Force Plan and Kentucky's Smart Growth Plan just to name a few.

Lynn was our "go to guy" for comprehensive analysis information. He knows where to go and how to get any facts and figures that were requested. He says we can call or email him any time we need his help. Lynn's email address is Lynn.Garrison@earthlink.net



Charlie and Elsa Wilkins

Charlie and Elsa Wilkins retired from the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife December 31, 2008.

Charlie began working for the department of Fish and Wildlife in 1974 as a Wildlife Tech at West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area. In 1977 he moved to the Clay WMA. After five years he

returned to WKWMA as its manager.

He moved to Ballard WMA in 1985 and managed it until his retirement last month. Charlie was involved in trapping deer that were relocated across the state as part of Kentucky's white-tailed deer restoration.

Also while at Ballard he saw the waterfowl area's harvest change from Canada geese to primarily ducks. Charlie was also one of the few that helped trap elk out west.

Charlie has been responsible for thousands of acres of habitat improvements for waterfowl over his career. He's assisted many hunters of myriad species.

Elsa began working for the department in 1985 as the secretary at Ballard WMA and continued to work there until retirement last month.

Elsa was instrumental to the day to day operations of the WMA, the lodge and the flow of paperwork and issues from Ballard WMA to Frankfort and back.

The staff at Ballard and Frankfort will sorely miss Charlie and Elsa and all they did for Ballard WMA and the agency.



David Hale

On December 31, 2008 KDFWR said farewell to **David Hale** after 27+ years with the Fish Transportation Section.

Through the course of his career David has helped stock some of Kentucky's state record fish, most recently the state record musky which was stocked in 1994.

David said that he will truly miss being a part of the Fish and Wildlife family and hopes his contribution to the Department has made the sportsmen of this state proud.

We wish David the best of luck with his retirement. His knowledge and skills will be missed in the years to come.

See "Retirements," page 4

"Retirements," continued



Rory Flynn

Rory Flynn ended his professional career with the Department on December 31, 2008.

For the past eight years Rory worked as a biologist in the Fisheries Division. The majority of his time was spent collecting data from anglers on the waters in Western Kentucky.

Prior to the Fisheries Division, he

worked in the Information and Education Division as CEPL. His career here actually started in November of 1976, where he, over the years, taught thousands of kids both in the school and at Camp Currie. It is amazing the lives he touched.

It is obvious he served the Department well. While conducting creel surveys or farm pond technical guidance requests, he always reacquainted with someone who from their childhood, remembered Rory teaching them about the outdoors.



Jeff Ratliff

Jeff Ratliff retired December 31, 2008, from the Eastern Fisheries District Of-

fice located in Prestonsburg.

Jeff initially started with the fisheries division as a seasonal in 1987 as a creel clerk in the eastern district. He continued in this seasonal position for several years until attaining a permanent position as a fisheries technician in 1990 at the same office.

While performing duties as a fisheries technician from 1990 – 2008, he worked with five different eastern fisheries district biologists and numerous assistant biolo-

gists. His long-term knowledge of the district has been invaluable for assisting new staff and will be missed in the future. Also, Jeff possesses very good outboard motor mechanic skills that saved the day many times.

A retirement gathering of local staff and a fish fry was held December 11 at the Eastern Fisheries District Office in Prestonsburg. Many

former projects and stories were discussed at the event.

We wish Jeff well in his retirement activities and many successful hunting and fishing endeavors.



So long, but not goodbye

Charles Bush has resigned his position as Director of the Engineering Division. We wish him the best of luck in his new position as the Director of the Division of Real Properties.

Charles came to Fish and Wildlife from Abandoned Mine Lands 15 years ago to serve as our Engineering Division Director. Charles has assisted all divisions in a variety of projects during his tenure

including shooting ranges, boat ramps, waterfowl impoundments, Ohio River intakes, dam safety, boundary surveys, land acquisition, sewer lines, Salato exhibits, fish hatchery renovations, and many others.

We wish him the best of luck with his new career and he surely will be missed. We look forward to working with him through Real Properties.



Adrienne Yancy and Hayley Lynch with Governor and Mrs. Beshear at the Employee Suggestion System Awards Ceremony. *Mark Marraccini photo*

Yancy, Lynch among 39 recognized at Employee Suggestion Awards ceremony

Adrienne Yancy and Hayley Lynch of the Department's Division of Information and Education were recognized along with 37 other state employees at the 29th annual Employee Suggestion System Awards Ceremony Wednesday, January 14, at the governor's mansion.

Governor and Mrs. Steve Beshear addressed the employees during the ceremony, whose efficiency suggestions resulted in an estimated \$1,403,433 first year implementation savings and a projected \$7 million over five years. The governor told the group that their efforts were especially critical during these times of economic strife. The employees shared about \$19,764 in awards.

"Innovative employee ideas are critical to government improvement," said First Lady Jane Beshear. "These employee suggestions are helping the state weather the current economic storm by improving efficiency and productivity within state agencies."

Hayley and Adrienne are editor and art/design director of the Department's Hunting and Trapping Guide, respectively.

Their suggestion to assume all layout and design of the guide themselves, instead of continuing to outsource portions

to an offsite printing company, not only eliminated steps and saved the agency time and money, but allowed them to make improvements to appearance, layout, and accuracy of approximately 1.5 million guides each year.

In making the guide improvements, they acquired copies of guides from all 49 other states and made dozens of changes to Kentucky's guides. As a result, the Quality Deer Management Association featured Kentucky's 2008-2009 Hunting and Trapping Guide in the December issue of its magazine, *Quality Whitetails*.

The Employee Suggestion System was established in 1981. Since its inception, the commonwealth has realized a total of more than \$38 million in first-year savings. Cash awards are paid by the cabinets realizing the savings from the suggestions and may range from a minimum of \$100 to 10 percent of the first-year savings, up to a maximum of \$2,500. Awards of \$100 may be given for ideas that are adopted but have intangible savings.

For more information on the Employee Suggestion System, visit personnel.ky.gov/emprel/kess/.

January new hires, promotions

We are pleased to announce the hiring of **Mark Cramer** (former Deputy Commissioner) as Wildlife Program Coordinator.

He will be our liaison for Adventure Tourism activities within the Cabinet and in charge of Department regulation development and review. Please welcome Mark aboard for round two.

The Engineering Division welcomes **Ramsey Quarles**. Ramsey will be working with the Survey Crew in researching the boundaries on Department-owned lakes.

PROMOTIONS

The Fisheries Division would like to congratulate **Fred Howes** on becoming the new Fisheries Program Coordinator for the Northeast Fisheries District located at the Minor Clark Fish Hatchery.

Fred began his career with the Fisheries Division as a Fisheries Technician in 1982 in the Northeastern District office. In 2004, Fred was promoted to a Fisheries Biologist II.

Now serving as the Program Coordinator for the district, Fred will coordinate the activities of fisheries staff who manage numerous water resources including Cave Run Lake, Grayson Lake, Greenbo Lake, and portions of both the upper Ohio and Kentucky Rivers.

Fred obtained his bachelors degree from Morehead State University in 1979. He will carry on an outstanding tradition of fine leadership in the Northeast District. We are fairly certain that the new state record musky recently caught from Cave Run Lake was the work of Fred's fine leadership skills.



Laura Patton inside a black bear den on Pine Mountain.
Dave Maehr photo

Laura Patton completes Kentucky Certified Public Managers program

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife state furbearer program coordinator and wildlife biologist **Laura Patton** was one of 19 Kentucky Certified Public Managers who graduated the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet's Governmental Services Center's program last month.

The Certified Public Manager® (CPM) program is a nationally accredited, in-depth, comprehensive training and development program for nominated employees from state and local government agencies. Graduates are required to complete classroom and online training as well as a

capstone project.

"The program aims to professionalize the practice of public management and increases the capacity of its participants

to effectively lead people and manage work processes," said Deputy Secretary Tim Longmeyer. "Professional development of the state workforce is a key to good government."

The KCPM program includes a distinct group of online courses offered through GSC's partnership with Kentucky State University's (KSU). These additions provide the participants a blended learning experience while expanding their public sector leadership and management skills.

During the awards ceremony, GSC also recognized 12 employees who successfully completed their Certificate of Management Fundamentals (CMF). CMF aids employees in effectively improving personal performance and the performance of others. CMF is open to all state employees who want to increase their professional and leadership skills, grow in their current jobs, and pursue even greater leadership responsibility.

To learn more about the KCPM program, CMF, and other training course offerings provided by the Governmental Service Center, visit personnel.ky.gov/gsc/.



ANNUAL DUCK HUNT MEETING A SUCCESS

The Kentucky Conservation Officers Association assembled for its annual duck hunt meeting near Henderson this month. Successful hunters included Jason Wells, Philip Crane and Rex Burkhead. Standing are Scott Herndon, Shane Carrier, David Casey and Loren Clark.



Clay WMA bur oak acorn planting research plot.



Scott Freidhof completing an eastern red cedar inventory at the Clay WMA in Nicholas County.

Northeast Region Forest Habitat Management

Historically, the KDFWR focused heavily upon the management of open land habitats to enhance conditions for wildlife in Kentucky. Forest habitat management often was left to other agencies or simply ignored due to a lack of training, experience or equipment.

In recent years, however, a significant paradigm shift has been in the works. Forest habitat management has increasingly been encouraged and prioritized. A clear example of that shift in philosophy is the Wildlife Division's Northeast Region, one of the most heavily forested regions in the state.

It is sobering to realize that the effects of forest habitat management decisions typically last far longer than a staff member's career, and generally exceeds his or her lifetime. But taking no action can have equally long lasting effects.

Inventory and management planning is critically important for making sound management decisions. Forest inventory and management planning are proceeding on multiple WMAs as staff time and priorities permit, including the Clay, Fleming, Grayson Lake, Paintsville Lake, and Yatesville Lake WMAs.

These inventories may be project

specific, as is often the case with WMAs owned by the KDFWR, or complete WMA inventories, required with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owned WMAs.

The shift in management emphasis has required some staff, resource, and attitude adjustments. Regional employees are encouraged to take as active a role as their current positions permit. Five attended SILVAH: Oak Training which is a forest inventory and oak management planning program. SILVAH: Oak stresses the significance of young oak trees being available in the understory to serve as potential replacements for canopy trees when canopy disturbance takes place. When a mature oak-hickory stand is harvested or knocked down by a tornado for example, a young oak-hickory forest must be ready under the canopy to replace the existing mature trees. Inventory data indicates in most cases that young oak-hickory forest is not currently present, due mostly to historical forest mismanagement and a lack of canopy disturbances in recent decades.

Staff training in invasive vegetation control has also increased dramatically. Establishing oak regeneration and controlling exotic invasive vegetation prior to

canopy disturbances is currently a primary activity of forest management in the Northeast Region.

Control work has been implemented on every WMA in the region. For example, at the Paintsville Lake WMA, 2,500 tree-of-heaven stems have been treated with herbicide and one acre of Kudzu treated. On the Clay WMA multiple acres of bush honeysuckle and garlic mustard have been treated.

On the Fleming WMA about four acres of tree-of-heaven have been treated, as has Japanese stiltgrass and multiflora rose. Invasive plant control is regrettably a job activity which ensures long-term job security. This type of work must become routine and ongoing to be effective over the long-term. Single treatments are seldom adequate. It can be frustrating to realize we may never win the war entirely, but the response of native vegetation and the benefits to wildlife make the effort worthwhile.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, which is killing hemlock trees throughout the eastern United States, has been detected on several southeastern Kentucky WMAs.

See "Forest," page 8

"Forest," continued



Above: The control of exotic invasive vegetation helps insure the oak seedling in the foreground, not the bush honeysuckle towering over it, will have an opportunity to respond to future canopy disturbances in this forest stand on the Clay WMA.

Below: A canopy tree at the Paintsville Lake WMA following crop tree thinning now has space for canopy expansion and an opportunity for sunlight to reach the forest floor.



Plans are in place to begin control efforts for this pest this winter.

Thinning and crop tree releases, designed to reduce tree competition, have been implemented on the Clay, Fleming, Paintsville Lake, and Yatesville Lake WMAs. A reduction in competition should lead to better developed tree crowns which should eventually lead to better acorn and other mast production for wildlife.

The resulting canopy disturbance will also improve growing conditions for forest understory plants, including the young oaks and hickory which will someday be

available to replace the over-story trees. When thinned trees are killed in place, snag and cavity tree resources for wildlife are enhanced.

Sometimes the best decision may be to simply start over. Regeneration harvests, clearcuts, or patch cuts involve cutting the majority of non-commercial trees and leaving the woody debris on the ground to provide horizontal woody cover.

Fruit-producing shrubs such as flowering dogwood, viburnums, and crabapples are left standing to provide food and vertical cover. Wildlife response to these cuts can be surprisingly fast. Rabbits, bobwhite quail, and songbirds dependant upon young forest habitat (e.g. eastern towhees) were observed using one such patch cut on the Paintsville Lake WMA within weeks of treatment.

Another common application of this technique is rotational alder management. More than 70 acres of alder dominated bottomland occurs on the Yatesville Lake WMA. Strips are rotationally cut (mechanically) through alder stands so each stand is totally rejuvenated every 20 years in order to ensure this habitat type persists. This

work is aimed primarily at American woodcock, but many early successional woodland species benefit.

Acorns and oak seedlings have been planted at the Paintsville Lake WMA to increase advanced oak regeneration prior to planned canopy disturbances. Bur oak acorn and seedling plantings at the Clay WMA are being compared to determine the best strategy for returning this important mast producer to this WMA.

It's hoped that lessons learned will eventually help us efficiently restore

many missing bottomland oak species to riparian areas throughout the region. Fruit producing shrubs were planted in Fleming WMA patch cuts to make those areas more attractive for ruffed grouse and other forest species.

Lastly, planting of American chestnut orchards on the Paintsville Lake and Grayson Lake WMAs are intended to help with the eventual restoration of this incredibly beneficial tree for wildlife.

Commercial timber harvests are planned for the Clay, Fleming, and Paintsville Lake WMAs as soon as various state and federal government protocols and procedures can be worked out. Plans call for harvesting eastern red cedar at the Clay WMA to improve oak-hickory forest, harvesting ice-storm damaged timber at the Fleming WMA, and conducting shelterwood harvests at Paintsville Lake to increase vegetative diversity and enhance oak regeneration.

While these harvests are wildlife oriented it's hoped some revenue can be generated to offset management costs and help with acquiring equipment and resources needed for more forest management efforts.

An initial step in all our WMA forest habitat management efforts is constructing a complex of woodland waterholes. These woodland waterholes are tremendously beneficial for enhancing wildlife diversity and very popular with many highly desirable game species. Woodland waterholes

See "Forest," page 9



Fleming WMA patch cut in a stand dominated by red maple.

Peabody WMA Bobwhite Consortium

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) and nine of the most prominent experts on northern bobwhites and their management convened in Central City, Kentucky to provide recommendations for more intensive management of Kentucky's largest state-owned wildlife management area (WMA), Peabody WMA.

The group assembled at the call of Commissioner Dr. Jon Gassett and Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Chairman Dale Franklin to transform Peabody WMA into a world-class bobwhite habitat and hunting ground.

The panel was afforded extensive information on the history and current status of the area. Eric Williams, Wildlife Biologist and manager of Peabody, outlined the area through a formal presentation and a field-based tour, and Mike Henshaw, retired Green River Regional Coordinator, served as a volunteer leader of the team on an aerial tour via helicopter.

The combination of presentations put the vast acreage in the appropriate landscape context and cemented the unique hurdles inherent in reclaimed mine ground.

To garner the perspectives of the expert panel, Brian Clark, Bluegrass Regional Coordinator, led a facilitated discussion. The group conversation was broken down into a series of topics regarding habitat, hunting, spe-

cialized management, and research.

Discussion topics centered on a few key aspects of quail management at Peabody WMA: hunting pressure, strip disking, prescribed burning, food enhancement, sericea lespedeza control, cattle grazing and the need for basic quail population biology research.

Using the comments garnered from this meeting, staff will write a long-term management plan for Peabody WMA focusing on small game habitat and population management. Included in this plan will be modifications to current habitat management practices as well as recommended changes to current regulations.

Public involvement will play a key role in obtaining the support of Peabody WMA users for these endeavors. The next major step in the process will be working with the

Commission to secure long-term funding to provide a base for a massive effort to improve small game habitat and quail/rabbit populations on Peabody WMA.

Attendees to the meeting included Wildlife Division Director Dr. Karen Alexy (KDFWR), Wes Burger (Mississippi St University), Brian Clark (KDFWR), Steve Clubine (Missouri Dept of Conservation), Dale Franklin (KDFWR), Jon Gassett (KDFWR), Craig Harper (University of Tennessee), Mike Henshaw (KDFWR – retired), Dave Howell (Quail Unlimited), Pat Keyser (University of Tennessee), Don McKenzie (NBCI Coordinator), John Morgan (KDFWR), Austin Musselman (TNC), Clay Sisson (The Albany Project Coordinator), Shane Wellendorf (Tall Timbers Research Station), and Eric Williams (KDFWR).



“Forest,” continued

are also a habitat management practice which has the potential to benefit endangered species, such as the Indiana bat.

Forest habitat management in the Northeast Region is not just a public lands initiative. Private lands biologists in the region are busy emphasizing the

importance of forest habitat management with landowners. Woodland waterhole construction, invasive plant control, timber stand improvement, and when appropriate, commercial harvest, are all strongly encouraged. They also have been extremely helpful with public lands management efforts when their work loads permit.

Tremendous strides have been made in making forest habitat management a significant habitat management priority within the Northeast Region. While some large hurdles remain, the progress made has been remarkable in a relatively short period of time. That progress will continue to grow, just like the forest habitats we manage.

LEGISLATIVE WILD GAME DINNER, JANUARY 8

Sgt Greg Watts tends elk rumake, an annual favorite.



Ken Richards, Chad Parker and Greg Youree cooking fish.



Emily Hogue of the Salato Center gives Lt. Gov. Mongiardo some shooting tips. *Brian Moore photo*



John Akers slicing buffalo roast for Rep. Robin Webb.



Father-son Bobby and John Widener of Rare Breed of Bluegrass band.